



Session update from Olympia

March 18, 2011

Three-year revenue down another \$778 million

The state Economic & Revenue Forecast Council has released its new revenue forecast for the 2009/11 and 2011/13 biennia and the projections, while not as bad as feared, are nevertheless daunting. Revenues continue to lag, only more so — the state is now expected to receive \$80 million less in 2009/11 and \$698 million less in 2011/13, for an overall decrease of \$778 million over three years.

This leaves the state about \$201 million short for the 2009-11 biennium, after adjusting for caseloads and assuming the governor's level of policy requests. The projected shortfall for 2011/13 is approximately \$5 billion.

You can read the Forecast Council's reports [here](#) and you can watch the full revenue forecast [here](#).

Washington is not Wisconsin (or Ohio or Indiana)

This week, on my blog, I've written extensively about our ongoing state revenue problem. I've pointed out how the situation we're in as a state is a result of the Great Recession that occurred after the actions of Wall Street bankers pushed our financial system to the brink of collapse. (See [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for a few prior posts on the subject.)

I've also written in support of our public employees, who are being unfairly targeted by those who are eager to seize the nationwide

Contact Information:

Olympia Office:

307 Legislative Building

By Postal Mail:

Senator Lisa Brown
PO Box 40403
Olympia, WA 98504-0403

By Phone:

Olympia Office: (360) 786-7604

Spokane Office: (509) 456-2760

Toll-free legislative hotline:
1-800-562-6000

TTY/TDD Hearing impaired
hotline: 1-800-635-9993

budget crisis and use it to advance their political goals. (See [here](#) and [here](#) for more.)

I studied labor history in graduate school. I believe unions and collective bargaining were essential to the creation of the middle class and in banning practices, such as child labor and sweat shops, abuses that unfortunately still exist in other countries. (A little known fact is that Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, "The Rebel Girl," was arrested in Spokane 100 years ago as part of the free speech fights that labor activists and unions had with local governments and employers during the early days of the labor movement.)

Today, I see the targeting of public employees as part of an effort to systematically weaken the public sector, the social safety net, and the power of organized workers in general.

There is a national movement that is a well-financed and organized campaign to dismantle much of the legacy of the New Deal that helped working families recover from the Great Depression. To read my full blog on this topic click [here](#).

Keeping Up with the Senate Online



Keeping up with what's happening in the Senate (or the House, for that matter) from the convenience of your home or workplace just got easier. [You can click on this link](#) to go to the Legislature's online network home page (see example above).

In the center of the page near the top, you'll see the heading "What's happening on the floor?" and a pair of links that will take you to the respective House and Senate display boards that list the current status. Depending on what's happening on the floor, the display boards will tell you which bill or other piece of legislation is behind heard, or whether the Senate has adjourned or is at recess.

E-mail:

lisa.brown@leg.wa.gov

Web site:

<http://senatedemocrats.wa.gov/senators/brown>

For staff contact information click [here](#)

TRY YOUR HAND AT BALANCING THE BUDGET

Budget solutions are like opinions — everyone has one. Well, here's your chance to try out your ideas by clicking on our [budget calculator](#). You not only can choose which public services you'd cut, and by how much, but you can also see just much or how little savings those reductions provide — and how close they get you to balancing the budget.

[Web Site](#)

[Contact me](#)

[About the Legislature](#)



Shane Florance learns about the “Dance of Legislation”

This last week Shane Florance, from Millwood, worked for me and all the Senators in the Senate Page Program. Shane attends RiverCity, a project-based school where students approach their learning as they would a full-time job or internship. Shane wrote in his application that his primary motivation for wanting to experience the Page Program was to “get a better grasp on how politics influences every facet of today’s world.” Shane helped to perform many tasks that allow Senators and staff to focus on legislative duties. In addition, he spent two hours each day in Page School learning about the legislative process and observing state government in action. Thank you Shane!

I wanted to mention one final time that applications to the Senate Page Program can be submitted no later than 5 weeks before the end of the legislative session - so there is still just a bit of time left! If you or somebody you know is age 14-16, and interested in being a page, please click [here](#) for more information or click [here](#) to download an application. The completed application can be mailed to: Senator Lisa Brown, PO Box 40403, Olympia, WA 98504.

I greatly appreciate hearing from you. Please continue to phone, mail or e-mail me or my staff with your thoughts on various issues, ideas or concerns you have as the legislative session moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa".

Click [here](#) for contact information for my Olympia or Spokane office.